

NOTES ON THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE MANOR HOUSE, BYFLEET.

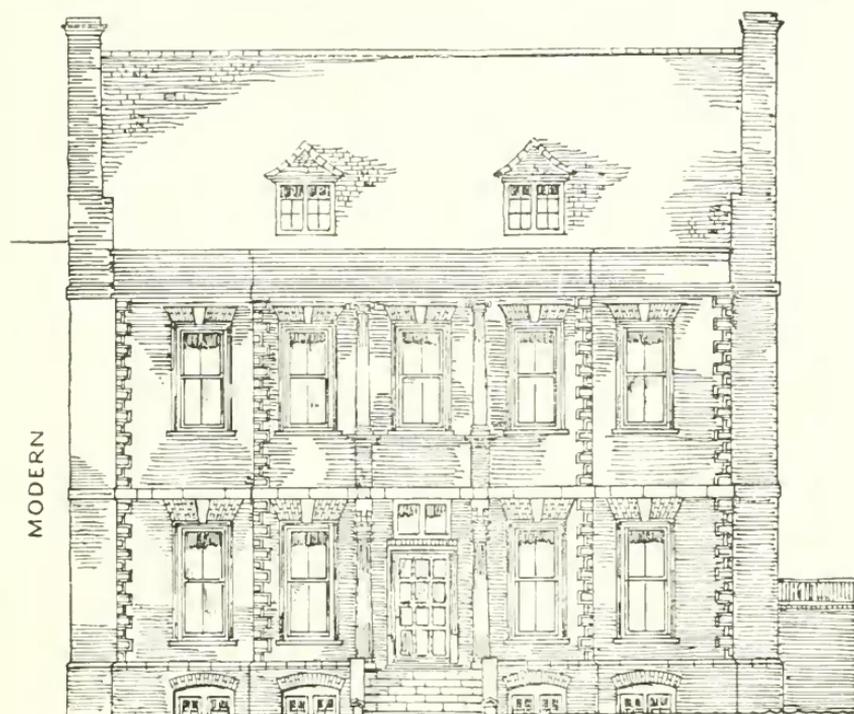
BY

EDWARD P. WARREN, F.S.A.

AS a corollary to Miss Mitchell's admirable and most interesting historical account of this house, I venture to offer the following notes as to the existing structure. In doing so, I wish to say that the entire removal of the ivy from the north front, and the subsequent repairs undertaken last winter, fully confirmed the opinion I had the honour to express to the Society on the occasion of the visit in July, 1905, that the house was built early in the eighteenth century, of materials mainly derived from the demolished Jacobean building. The existing stone plinth or base moulding is Jacobean, so are the fluted pilasters that flank the front door. These pilasters were disposed, in the Georgian rebuilding, in a meaningless fashion in two tiers. It is, however, apparent from their similarity in height and size, and from other indications, that all four formed part of a porch, presumably on the old ground floor level, which I take to have been lower than the Georgian level.

In conducting the recent repairs, it was found that the ivy, which almost covered this front, had, in its usual insidious manner, loosened the stone band or "string-course" which subdivides this elevation, marking approximately the first floor level. The whole of this stone string-course had to be taken out and refixed. This process revealed the very interesting fact that it consisted almost entirely of Jacobean window-jambs and sills, the mouldings of which are turned inside while the

plain or "bed" faces are presented to public view as a flat square stone band. These have all been carefully replaced in their old positions. The course of repairs



NORTH ELEVATION AS IN 1896

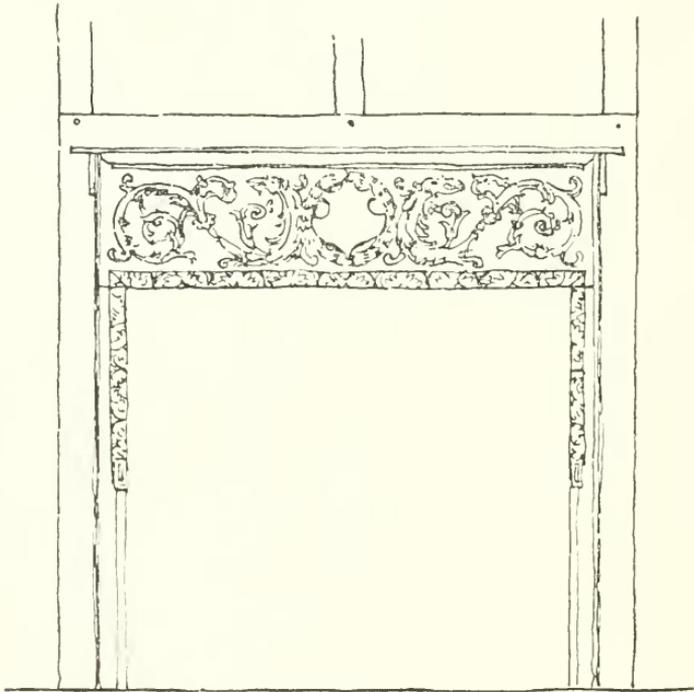
THE MANOR HOUSE, BYFLEET.

to the roof brought to light some interesting fireplaces in the attics. These are of a primitive character with brick jambs plastered, an oak "head" or beam to carry the mantel, which is a tapering hood of rough brickwork, half-a-brick thick, and, of course, intended to be plastered over. A finely-moulded piece of cornice with dentils, was found in use as a rafter. This has been used as a cornice to the small portico now placed over the front door.

On the south side of the house the oak door frame of the central garden door is a relic of the earlier house; it is of Tudor Gothic character, and may

belong to the end of Henry VIII's or the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. The staircase is of pronounced Jacobean character, but there are many evidences in joins, misfits and alterations of angle, of its adaptation to its new position in the Georgian house.

In one of the first-floor bedrooms is a singularly charming and interesting stone chimney-piece, of which I offer an illustration. This is very fine in execution,

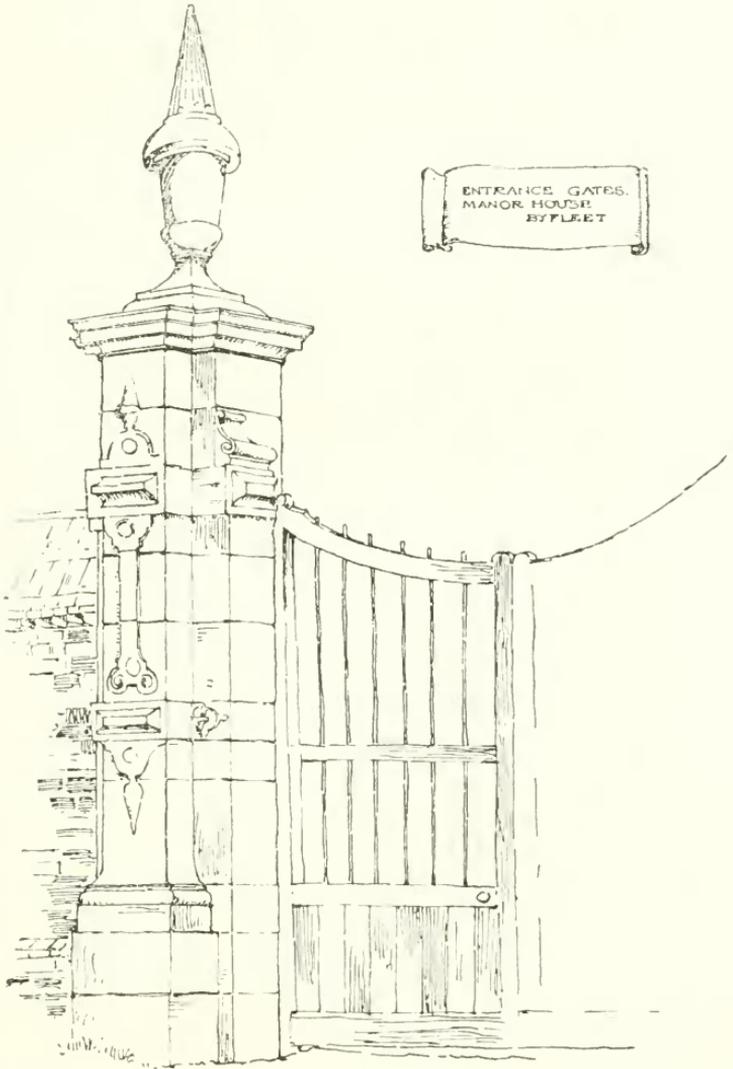


STONE CHIMNEY-PIECE AT THE MANOR HOUSE
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much like similar work to be seen in Flanders, but probably of English workmanship of the reign of James I or Charles I.

There is a good deal of panelling in the house of Jacobean and of early Carolian character, and in the south-east ground floor room is a fine wooden chimney-piece, with fluted pilasters below the mantel, and tapered "strapped" pilasters above.

There are considerable remains of decorative arabesque painting in some of the small panelling found in the attics.



There is also a good deal of Jacobean woodwork in the drawing-room, panelling, arched recesses, and pilasters; but all this refitted and mixed up with Georgian and later additions.

The forecourt is very complete and imposing, and the handsome stone piers of its central northern entrance gate are remarkable. On the ends of the lower "straps" or bands, on the outer pilasters, are suggestions, in stone, of staples and retaining pegs or wedges, a feature derived from Flemish or German sources, as are also the splayed or facet-cut stone jewel ornaments, and the "engaged" pendants and finials on these piers.